



DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

September 2005

Dear Principal:

As this school year begins, we all want to thank you for your service to the most important Americans, our children. We know that in addition to the vital charge of educating children, you are entrusted with keeping them safe during the school day.

Preparation and early notifications of potential danger are key aspects to keeping our children safe. Whether it is a fire, tornado, hurricane, terrorism or other type of incident, the more prepared a school is for emergencies, the safer children will be. In addition to preparing faculty and children through drills and exercises, having access to immediate alerts and warning systems will provide you the best information to allow you to respond quickly and appropriately should an incident develop.


To augment the carefully developed alerting protocols your school district has in place, the Department of Education has joined with the Departments of Commerce and Homeland Security to provide another tool to use as part of your emergency plan - the NOAA Public Alert Radio. NOAA Public Alert Radios are designed to signal different types of alerts ranging from weather emergencies to child abductions and other law enforcement emergencies. NOAA Public Alert Radios offer the capability to transmit all alerts to a specific city, region, or nationwide depending on the circumstance. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is an agency of the Department of Commerce.

In preparation for a new school year and in recognition of September as National Preparedness Month, NOAA Public Alert Radios are being provided to all of the public schools located in several large metropolitan areas and in two rural states as the first stage of a nationwide program.

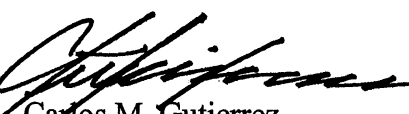
The enclosed material provides all the information necessary to make optimal use of your school's new radio. For additional information and to register your new radio, please go to <http://public-alert-radio.nws.noaa.gov/>. To arrange other safety education and training opportunities for your school, you may contact your local Citizens Corps Council (<http://www.citizencorps.gov/>), Homeland Security's community-based program to promote citizen preparation and participation.

Thank you again for your hard work to better educate our children and your steadfast attention to their safety in all nature of emergencies.

Sincerely,



Margaret Spellings
Department of Education



Carlos M. Gutierrez
Department of Commerce



Michael Chertoff
Department of Homeland Security